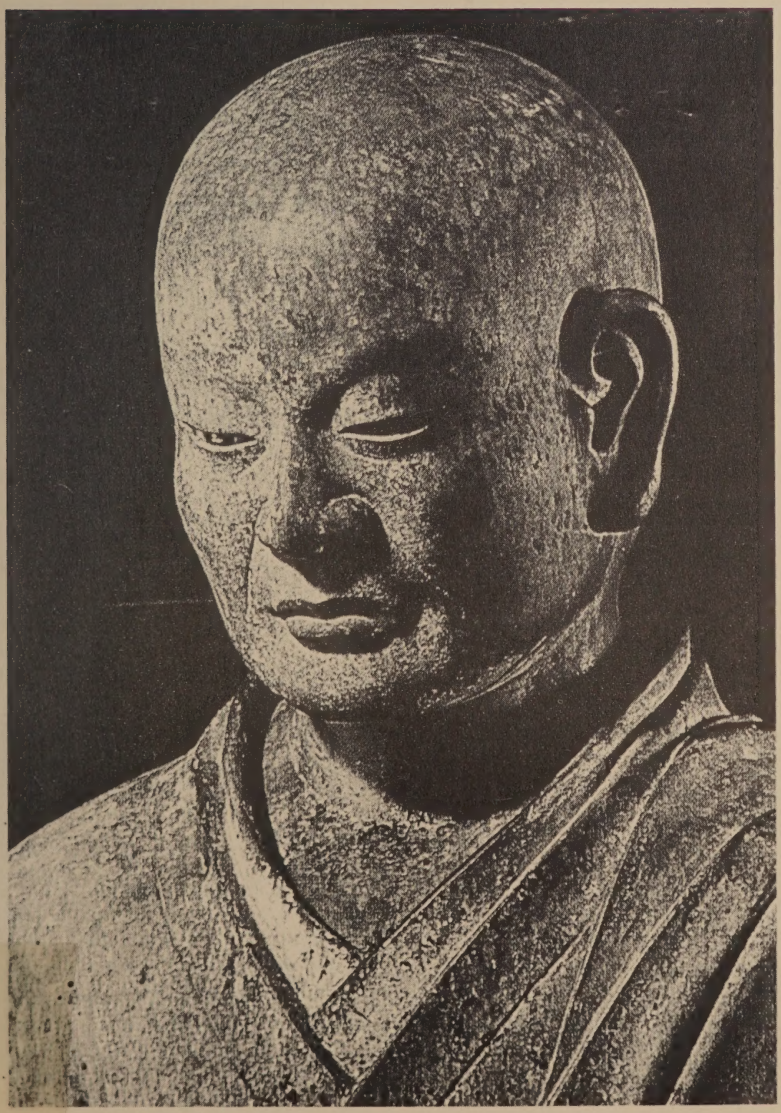
VOLUME 31 / NO 4 AUGUST 1980

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER



BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

MAN A TRANSITIONAL BEING

Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, and color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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EDITORIAL

Where I Am Not, God Is

TO A DEGREE that would be ridiculous if it weren't so disastrous, we Americans tend to believe we are going to be all right if only we can manage to be ourselves. The search for identity has become both a popular sport and sacrosanct goal. On the assumption that if we can spin a self we can crawl into it forevermore, we spend lifetimes building selves like costumes for the Mummers' Day Parade.

The predominance of these rugged individualists began to disappear, however, with the end of the first quarter of this century and dwindled around the advent of TV (on which it was then impossible not to see the last surviving behemoths—Frank Lloyd Wright, Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost among others), until nowadays, as noted here in the previous issue, we are entirely lacking in "great" people of every sort.

Along with the virtual extinction of the breed the very idea of such creatures has so lost its ability to please us that our restless spinning of selves seems to be no more than habit, fear of giving it up, fear of not knowing what else to do with our lives. A sensitive sector of society has indeed begun to realize that it is these elaborate and enormously costly selves of ours which constitute one of our main problems. "Where I am not," it is finally beginning to be understood, "God is." It is our increasingly oriental observation that the self, this precious quest of ours, is what is getting in the way of what is true and what is real. The self for which we have willingly given our all is turning out to be not just a burden but a hindrance, an obstacle, a downright threat. The difficulty lies not so much in giving it up (though that isn't easy) but in how to exist without it. To do this requires either a society with different values than ours or else a stepping out of society into an alternate way. Some are fortunate enough to be able to have found ways of surrender, awakening, and enlightenment. Others are unfortunate enough to survive by themselves in rage or loneliness or both. The giving up of the self, or at least a willingness to do so, is one of the changes now taking place in our world. We run into few who are not involved in it.

The contents of this issue are therefore devoted to the question of self. For some of our readers, this will smack of human egotism—of that "*me*-centrism" which, they think, denies the power of God. To us, though, interested in filling our pages with every kind of human effort to meditate and pray, God's power is evident in the story of Shakyamuni's trips to India, his guru's discourse which follows, and the classic vision of the flowering of a superspirit by Sri Aurobindo.

PRAYER AS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION FROM WITHIN

by MICHAEL HERBERT SHADICK

WHAT we need to do in prayer is bring God into contact with our real self, as best we can, and not fear to let Him see what is false in our false self. Of course, God knows our every thought without our having to tell Him. But it is important for *us* that we tell Him everything. This implies a humble attitude in which we let go of ourselves and renounce any efforts to maintain a facade. We must let God know what we really think, what we really feel, and what we really desire, even when these things are not altogether honorable. We must be completely frank about our motives insofar as we can be. Why all this effort to tell God what He already knows? The mere effort of admitting that we are not as unselfish or as zealous as we pretend to be is a great source of grace. Hence we should approach God in a spirit of humility and compunction, ready to manifest things of which we are not proud. This means we must abandon all pugnacity about ourselves and get rid of our instinct for self-defense and self-justification, which is, in itself, the greatest obstacle to God's grace. As Damien Isabell has so well put it, "The relationship to the Lord is like any other relationship, only more so: it thrives on reality and honesty."

Self-revelation involves, at times, the ecstasy of discovering something truly amazing and beautiful about yourself and about the Lord's will for your life. At other times self-revelation is quite painful. But at *all* times self-revelation is absolutely essential to spiritual growth. We must accept who we are before we can accept who we are to the Lord. We must accept our own will before we can know *His* will for our lives. Our self-revelation is part and parcel of His revelation to us.

Okay, Lord, No Miracles

by BETH SCOTT

THE PHONE wakened me. Seven o'clock. Sunday morning. Nobody ever calls at that hour. I rolled over in bed, lifted the receiver.

"Mom, it's Doug. I had a nervous breakdown. Can Dad come get me at the airport?"

Doug, the irrepressible jokester. Even this first semester away at college hadn't stifled his enthusiasm for the tease that shocked.

"Sure," I quipped. "What else is new?"

"Mom, I'm not joking. I had a breakdown. Everybody's looking at me. They can see right through me."

His words were laced with panic.

"Twenty minutes, Doug. Dad will be there in twenty minutes."

My husband was climbing into his clothes.

Long after the car had left the driveway, I was still sitting on the edge of the bed, holding the telephone receiver in both hands.

He came in the door, head down, hands clapped over both ears. "Don't talk, Mom." His face was rimmed with snow. What had happened? He had planned to drive home with friends for Christmas vacation. What is a nervous breakdown? Out of the whirl of questions, I prayed silently: Dear Lord, give us the strength to meet what we do not know . . . .

Doug went directly to his room. With the help of friends we arranged for his immediate hospitalization.

He had been studying for exams when the letters danced from right to left, from bottom to top on the printed page. Then the squiggles had become a jungle of monsters. It was then, he said, that he heard "something break" inside his head and voices whispering through the static. Schizophrenia, the doctors said.

That was how it began. Three months later, Doug came home to us and entered the local college. Group therapy sessions on campus, weekly visits to a psychiatrist, and daily medications brought slow, steady improvement. Some of his old spark returned. But his eyes were old. They were the eyes of one who has seen too much too soon, eyes that have known the pain of the incomprehensible, the fears of the unknowable.

One day he moved into his own apartment. A short time later, he acquired a girl friend. Finally all medication was withdrawn. Doug was well! Friends who had prayed for his recovery rejoiced with us that the miracle had come to pass. It was the happiest Fourth of July we had ever had.

Six months later, on an icy Saturday in January, came the call. "We must all die now before the plague strikes!"

My heart turned to stone. "Doug!" I screamed. "Where are you?"

He jabbered incoherently.

Suddenly a voice in the background shouted, "His apartment!"

My husband dropped the extension phone and raced for the car.

Moments later, he returned, eyes brimming. All of Doug's

friends were in the apartment, trying to persuade him to commit himself for treatment. He had refused. The police had been called and had taken him to a county mental-health facility. He could be held involuntarily, without treatment, for seventy-two hours.

We were in touch with the nurses hourly. Finally Doug came on the phone to say he had committed himself. Now there would be no ugly proceedings in court.

Early the next morning a call came from a doctor I did not know. Doug had attempted suicide at the center and been taken by ambulance to a hospital in a distant city. Would I permit the surgery that he had refused? Yes. Yes. Dear Lord, why hast Thou forsaken us?

That afternoon, my husband and I were at our son's bedside. The surgeon said Doug would recover. My knees turned to jelly. But the relief I felt was soon replaced by anger. What about Doug's mind? Hadn't he been made well? Been taken off medication? Hadn't God answered our prayers? No, He hadn't been listening.

Needing time to sort out my thoughts and feelings, I walked along a lengthy corridor. I thought I heard music, the melody of a half-forgotten hymn. Or was my own mind playing tricks, taking me back to happier days when our son was small and his tomorrows were filled with promises?

"Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom . . . ." A woman's voice backed by piano music. The words were unmistakably clear, coming from behind a partially closed and unmarked door. I pushed it open. This was obviously a recreation room: brightly-painted cabinets lined two walls, pingpong and pool tables filled the center, and at the rear was an old upright piano. At the piano sat a middle-aged woman with her back to me. Her shoulders trembled as she sang: ". . . and I am far from home. Lead, Thou, me on . . . ."

Funny. I had sung that hymn in church for years but had never really listened to the words.

In a rich contralto, the woman sang: "I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me."

Like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that suddenly fall into place, the meaning of the phrase was clear. One step. Of course. We had prayed for the distant scene—the miracle—instead of Doug's wellness of a single moment. I felt curiously warm and uplifted as if that ancient hymn had been written for me, for Doug, for our family. I closed the door softly, rejoined my husband.

Doug came home that spring. And now, as I ask God to guide my son one step at a time, I pray also for that unknown singer—a woman whose own sorrow helped me to understand mine.

•

IN CARE OF HIS DARKNESS

by THOMAS JOHN CARLISLE

Some time during the night
God will look in on me
to see if I am all right
to check whether I breathe
in easy cadence.
He will turn on the night-light
and observe my face
searching for the trace of a smile
where my lips curve slightly.
He will whisper a prayer
for my safe journey toward morning
and leave me comfortably
in care of His darkness.

WHAT A FRIEND CAN DO

A PHOTO-ESSAY ABOUT MARJORY

by TOM DUNHAM

I'VE KNOWN Marjory less than five years, but now, as I think of it, it seems as if I've known her all my life. Perhaps it's this feeling of timelessness, of a relationship well-settled-in from the moment it begins, that first describes a special friendship.

My two children, my wife, and I were looking for a get-away-from-it-all vacation during the summer of 1976. The past year had been a busy one, with more than a few frazzled ends, and May found us joining the workaday millions searching for a summer reprieve. When someone told us of the availability of Marjory's cottage on an island off the coast of Maine, we leaped at the chance and signed up for two weeks—no questions asked.

Now it is difficult to recall whether it was her cottage or a meeting with Marjory herself, prior to our vacation arrangements, that first warmed me to her. It makes no difference, really, for Marjory and her cottage, I was to discover, were clear and beautiful reflections of each other.

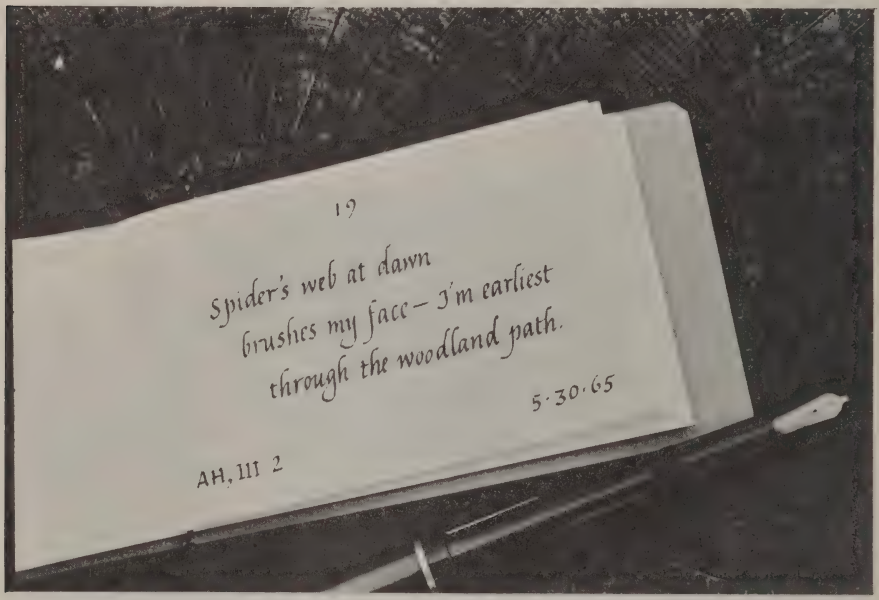
The cottage, a small, weathered, gray and green two-story set on the island's rocky edge just fifteen feet or so above the high-tide line, was at first glance less than I had hoped for. Without electricity, shower, or refrigerator. No TV, no radio, no rowboat moored out front. No washer or dryer, no endless supply of hot water. But the air was crisp, and I had to strain my eyes to see the mainland through the living room windows.

It didn't take long before the cottage and the island became more than any one of us could have privately arranged. Each of us rediscovered the pleasure of lazy conversation and the sea-born sounds of island life. We agreed the only wake-up alarm we wanted was the row of mewing gulls perched on our bedroom rooftop, the only call to supper the sudden whoosh of a changing tide. Having no rowboat meant we prowled the tidal pools like children again. The anticipated shower stall turned out to be a deep claw-footed tub that came up to my shoulders.

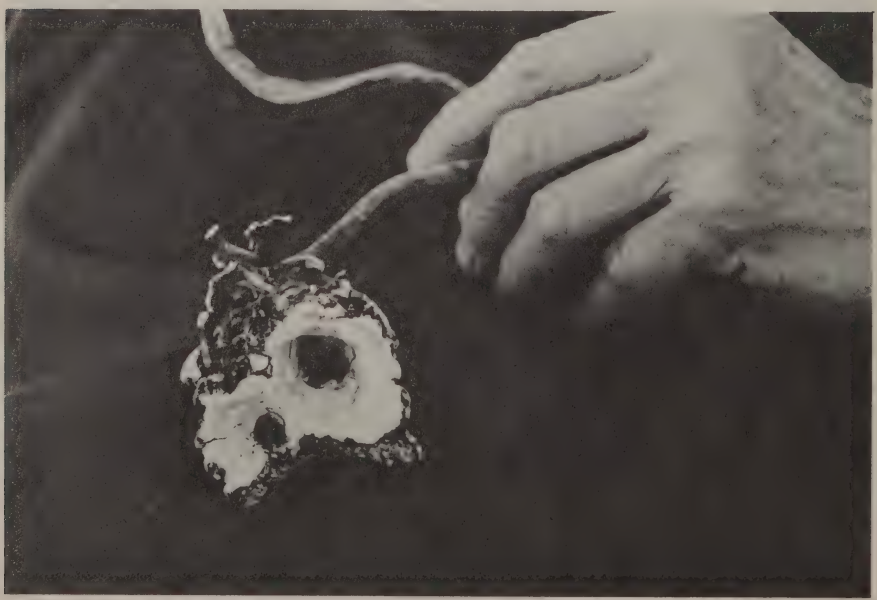
My wife and I realized that the island cottage was not a quaint, rustic summer house removed but as true an extension of Marjory's everyday living as the dish of sea-glass on her bookcase, as the small volume of haiku she had written, handlettered, and bound, as the hand-washed bed sheets snapping on the backyard line.

(Continued on page 12)

Haiku is a natural form, I feel, for Marjory, who revealed to me that her interest in it was sparked by a footnote in a favorite story by Salinger.



I often passed by and ignored this memento from Monhegan–a dried, worn strand of kelp encrusted with barnacles, until at her request I picked it up and was startled by its beauty. Now I seek it out and pass it around, as proud as if I'd found it myself.



"Simplify!" Thoreau's advice is a favorite notion of Marjory's, as her table setting suggests. Like haiku, its simplicity reveals the author's hand.

I questioned her about the scrub-board laundry and why she didn't own a washer. "Oh, I don't know," she answered. "Never really had much room for one, I guess."

She set the tub out to soak in the sun and felt a few of the sheets on the line to see if they were dry. I could see there was nothing remotely eccentric about her reply.

Over the past four years there has been no radical change in my life because of Marjory. Nothing someone can see, anyway. I haven't felt the call of self-reliance and laid claim to a stony two acres in Vermont. Nor have I sold our TV or sworn off white bread. To do so would be as much out of keeping with my character as it would be for Marjory to up and mow the overgrown patch of lawn she happily suggests might be "the garden of the future." (As, with its dandelions, wild onions, and assorted other edibles, it well could be.)

Marjory is too much her own person—too at peace with herself—to impose. I think that's the key. She's been a reassurance, a constant, gentle reminder, that a full and active and creative life can be lived without abandoning the pleasures of the earth, large and small. From her I have gained confidence that I can simplify my life, learn to see through the clutter, and find the beauty that is just underfoot or an arm's reach away.

A Senior Citizen's Prayer

O GOD, help me to stop blaming other people for my sins, for it only makes me lonelier. I need their love and friendship, You know.

Help me make the effort to go to church, God, so I can converse with You in Your house. If someone must pick me up, let me be gracious and grateful. Help me to find ways to repay them so I don't feel bitter and they grow to dislike me. Help me be cheerfully interested in them so they will enjoy having me ride with them.

At church, help me be friendly with those around me and not sit with a long face and porcupine attitude. Help me offer my services in what I can still do. If I can't go to church, remind me to offer my services if work can be brought to me. Maybe I could phone other shut-ins. No matter how bad off I may be, there are others who are worse off. Keep reminding me of this fact which, it seems, I like to forget.

Help me have the courage to go to the Senior Citizen gathering-place and make friends. Make me realize they need me as much as I need them. Help me not to look only inward or at TV. Make me broaden my interests by attending worthwhile events going on in my town. Remind me to invite a friend of any age to go along. Two's company.

When I am invited to my daughter's, my sister's, or my neighbor's, make me sincerely praise things, congratulate her on her taste, admire her housekeeping. Don't let me show my envy. If I must be poor, let me use what I have wisely but not ungenerously, trusting you to magnify my 'loaves and fishes' through friendships. Let me be lighthearted, God, able to tell a joke once in a while so people will laugh with me, not at me. Last of all, God, help me to keep in mind that appreciation is the best friend-maker of all. Amen.

—Martha J. Beckman

TAKING THE JUMP

A REGULAR GUY IS THOROUGHLY CHANGED BY INDIA

THE FRIENDLY FACE under the big, bright-banded, broad-brimmed hat belongs to a thirty-six-year-old Irish-American from Providence, Rhode Island, who goes by the name of Shakyamuni—Buddha's name—now that he has returned from his second trip to India within three years. Along with the name, he is entitled to be called Swami, which means "one who is master of himself." To those who knew him before, other changes are apparent: the dark-red beard, the loosely-fitting vividly-red clothes, the 108-bead mala that hangs around his neck, the serenity of his blue gaze, the loving, accepting attitude he expresses. He did not go to India in search of these changes. He went, he says, "not because I saw the light, but because I felt the heat."

Born Mike Cull in a traditional Irish-Catholic working-class neighborhood like the one pictured in *Going My Way,* he started his untraditional search in a way more and more familiar in our society: the use and abuse of a drug—in his case, alcohol. Discovering that a drink or two took care of his need to be "normal" and to belong, Mike proceeded, as alcoholics-in-the-making do, to use it as a crutch in just about every department of his life. Service in Vietnam increased his dependence on it, until, in the late 1960's, back in this country and studying urban-planning at St Peter's College in Jersey City, grossly overweight, chronically angry and depressed, he joined the young dissidents who were making the headlines of that violent era. He married a fellow-student. They had a daughter, Meghan, who is still the apple of his eye. But the drinking spoiled his studies ("I got to St Peter's just in time to help destroy the traditions") and eventually his marriage, too. "I didn't become delinquent," he now says, "until I became adult."

In 1973, he found the way out through Alcoholics Anonymous. (This route to recovery, sanity, and spiritual awakening has grown so commonplace that some A.A. members speak, not without paradox, of "holy alcohol.") Like most alcoholics after sobering up, he found himself burdened with a self he did not know, did not like, and had no idea what to do with in a world devoted to values of self-assertion and success which threatened his ability to stay sober. People who knew him during this period recall a young man anxious about everything—his marriage, which ended in divorce in 1978, his daughter, who minded his absence from home, his job, a highly political one involving urban education projects for the State of New Jersey.

During this time of turmoil he became friends with an A.A. member named Paul S——— who was "into" the reading of Tarot cards, experiments with yoga, humanistic psychology, Gurdjieff, Jung, and Carlos Castenada. Through Paul and a woman named Toby who ran an astrology shop in Princeton, he came upon the numerous bestselling books by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Toby—who had become one of Bhagwan's *sannyasins* (disciples) under the name of Ma Prem Nieto—introduced him to Bhagwan's *Way of The White Cloud,* a synthesis of the wisdom of many sages, including, along with those mentioned above, Kierkegaard, Nietszche, the Hasidim, Gandhi, the Sufis, Rollo May, and, in particular, the classic Lao Tze, who was the first master to capture his interest and therefore the one with the most impact on him. According to Toby, Bhagwan believed a synthesis of the world's wisdoms was more necessary nowadays than the establishment of a new faith. The idea attracted Mike/Shakyamuni. After delving into more of Bhagwan's writings, he decided to join a group travelling to India to meet the Master.

When he arrived in Poona, the tropical city full of educational institutions where the Rajneesh Meditation Center is located, his first impression was that he had rediscovered all his old friends from hippie days in Jersey City: "My God, I thought, they've found a place to hide!" The familiar-looking crowd proved, though, to be composed entirely of pilgrims like himself who had journeyed there from all over the world. His first visit to the ashram reminded him of his first A.A. meeting on the West Side of New York City. Like his A.A. experience, it supplied him with a profound sense of belonging and became a turning-point in his existence. It was the end of his anxiety about everything. The beginning.

"You can tell how it happened," he says, "but not what it is." The effect of his telling about Bhagwan is a desire on the listener's part to make the pilgrimage to India also.

BHAGWAN was born Rajneesh Chandra Mohan in the village of Kuchwada, on December 11, 1931. His father was a merchant, his

family religion Jain.

On the night of March 21, 1953, while he was a student at Saugar University, something miraculous occurred. Enlightenment happened to Bhagwan. He was twenty-one.

"That night," he says, "another reality opened its door, another dimension became available. Suddenly it was there—the other reality, the separate reality, the really real, or whatsoever you want to call it. Call it God, call it Truth, call it Dharma, call it Tao or whatsoever you will."

"That night I became empty and became full. I became non-existential and became existence. That night I died and was reborn."

For the next thirteen years Bhagwan remained partly in the academic world. He completed his M.A. in 1957, first in his class. He taught philosophy at Raipur's Sanskrit College and later at the University of Jabalpur. He travelled India as much as possible, speaking to others about what had happened to him, experimenting with meditation techniques as a means of effecting the same transformation in them. In the summer of 1964 he conducted his first ten-day intensive meditation camp in the hills of Rajasthan.

As his reputation as a fiery, outspoken, spiritual rebel grew, so did conflict with university authorities, particularly over his frank and freely expressed views on politics, religion, and sexual attitudes in India. In 1966 he resigned to devote himself totally to God. For the next two years he spoke all over the country—to individuals, to small groups in private homes, to fifteen and twenty thousands at public gatherings.

Then, in 1969, he disappeared from public life. A group of disciples, the nucleus of the organization which has evolved into the present Rajneesh Foundation, secured a large modern apartment in Bombay, which became his base. There he began to receive seekers, initiating into "neo-*sannyas*" those who were prepared to commit themselves completely to the fulfillment of their spiritual potential. The first Westerners came to him toward the end of 1970. This phase of his work continued for five years. He gave regular discourses, in Hindi and English, leaving his apartment four times a year to conduct meditation camps at various localities in India.

His "neo-*sannyas*"—his disciplehood—retains some of the elements of traditional Hindu *sannyas*: the orange clothing, the new Indian names, the malas consisting of 108 beads. The similarity ends there. The old *sannyas* was one of escape, renunciation, and discipline. Bhagwan's is one of total acceptance, of total involvement in life (see his discourse A TOTAL YES TO LIFE, beginning on page 21). It is being in the world but not of the world; it is carrying the silence of meditation into the marketplace.

"The very courageous, the really strong people, the really adventurous become attracted toward paths of self-realization,"

he says. "Religion is the greatest adventure there is. Going to Everest is nothing, going to the moon is also nothing. Going to the highest peak of your being is the real task."

"Modern man is the most false man that has ever existed on earth, and his falsity consists in that he thinks he can know just by seeing, just by being a spectator. This is a very borrowed life."

What a man perceives is existentially unreal; everything is interpreted personally. It is all in the eye of the beholder. Some call this private filter the identity, the personality, the mind, the self. Bhagwan calls it the ego. For the seeker, its dissolution—the evaporation of this false, individual separateness—is the only goal.

"The whole Western psychology up to now has not come to the point of non-ego," Bhagwan says. "It is still thinking in terms of ego—how to make it stronger, rooted, centered. The East takes the ego itself as the disease. There's no choice about it. Conscious or unconscious—both have to go. The East has been trying to go beyond mind. It is not a question of adjustment with society, it is a question of adjustment with existence itself. Your whole life, your emotions, your feelings, your intellect, body, mind, soul—everything is at stake. It is the last gamble. It is the ultimate game in life . . . . My message to humanity is: Enough is enough. Awake! See what man has done to man himself. In three thousand years man has fought five thousand wars. You cannot call this humanity healthy. And only once in a while has a Buddha bloomed. If in the garden only once in a while a plant brings a flower, and otherwise the whole garden remains without flowers, will you call it a garden? Something very basic has gone wrong. Each person is born to be a Buddha. Less than that is not going to fulfill you . . . . I declare to you your Buddhahood."

ALTHOUGH Shakyamuni is now living in this country again, teaching social workers at Rutgers' Alcoholism Center, conducting meditations in his home which serves as a Rajneesh Center on Jefferson Road in Princeton, it is Bhagwan and India that he has on his mind. "I became a disciple because Bhagwan offered me a way of becoming Zorba the Buddha," he says. "It's time to finish up here and go home."

All who have surrendered and found a new life of awakening and wholeness as Shakyamuni has will understand his singlemindedness. Certainly one attraction for him is Bhagwan's special liking for alcoholics who are getting well. "People of the heart," he calls them.

In Poona, Bhagwan is personally available to his *sannyasins* and all visitors to the ashram every day. Each morning he delivers a spontaneous discourse, clarifying and revitalizing from his own experience and knowledge the words of enlightened beings who have lived before—the sayings of Buddha and Jesus, the yoga sutras

of Patanjali, the songs of the Cedas and the Upanishads, the poems of the Baul mystics, the keys of Taoist, Zen, Sufi, and Hasidic masters.

Eloquent as his words are—and often funny ("I would like you to laugh your way to God," he says)—Bhagwan urges his *sannyasins* to become more and more aware of the silences between his words. "If you listen to the container—to the words—you will get bored," he says. "But if you listen to the content, you will be exhilarated, in deep ecstasy. I am not trying to say something, I am trying to show something. I am not a philosopher, not a theologian, not a theoretician—I have something within me, and I would like to share it with you. Because you cannot understand silence, I am forced to use words."

Bhagwan is also available in the evening, when he sees small groups at "darshan," the *sannyasins'* opportunity for intimate contact with enlightenment. At these sessions he gives individual guidance to all who seek it and initiates newcomers into *sannyas.*

For seekers there are the ten-day intensive meditation camps at which tried and tested therapies are employed to spark the inner transformation they desire. These include Western as well as Eastern techniques—Primal Therapy, Encounter, Gestalt, and Enlightenment Intensive as well as Zen, Vipassana, and Tantra. Approximately two thousand seekers attend seventy-five different sessions per month. Personal bodywork is also available—Rolfing, Alexander, Reflexology, and neo-Reichian techniques, acupuncture, and massage. Bhagwan himself does the prescribing of therapies for each seeker. "When I start working with a new disciple," he says, "I have to look, seek, and find how he can grow."

There is a constant flow of visitors in and out of Poona, which is sixty miles inland from the port city of Bombay. At least 4,000 are there at a time, of whom about 300 a month take *sannyas.* Many, like Shakyamuni, come for short periods and then return to jobs and families. So many come that the ashram is moving to larger grounds elsewhere in India. "We are moving away from the world," Bhagwan says, "so that a totally different kind of energy can be made available to you. You have to be given a safe place where you can work, a place where you are not distracted, a place where ordinary things, taboos, inhibitions are put aside, where only one thing is significant: how to become a Buddha."

The more who come, Bhagwan believes, "the bigger the Buddhafield there will be, the more powerful it will be. The possibility is that we can create one of the greatest and most powerful Buddhafields ever, because never before was there such a search, never before was man in such a crisis. We are on the threshold of something new that is going to happen to humanity. Man has lived long the way he has. By the end of this century a critical quantum leap is possible.

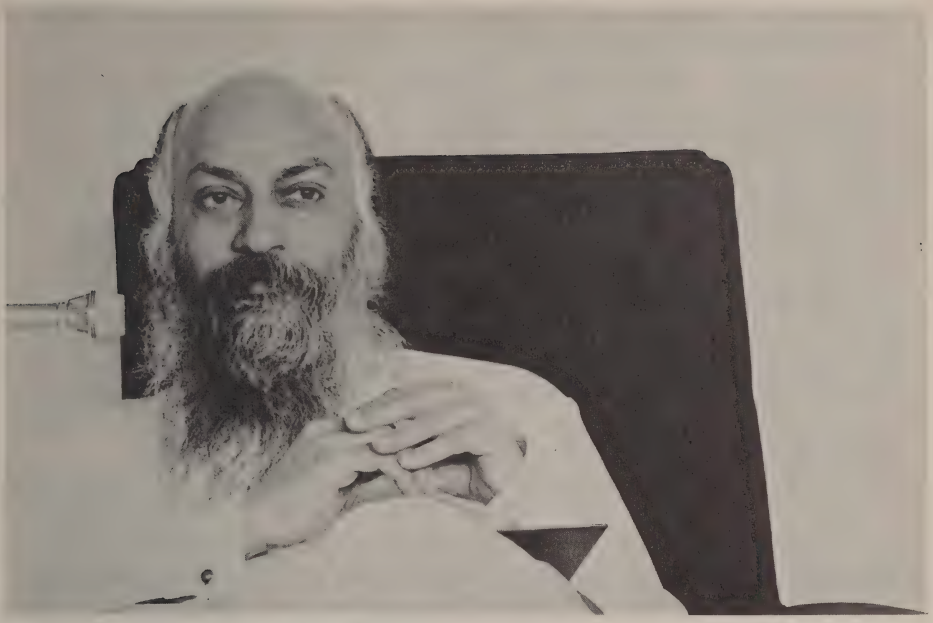
Either man will die in a third world war or man will take the jump and become a new man. Before that happens, a great Buddhafield is needed where we can create the future."

It is this wise and passionate vision of Bhagwan's that Shakyamuni has constantly in mind, "schizophrenic" though he sometimes feels back among the ego-temptations of life in New Jersey. It is a vision which appeals to many among the young and not-so-young today: how to become a Buddha. The necessity of learning this, of course, is Mike Cull's reason for taking the name of Buddha to his heart.

Quotations from Bhagwan copyright © by the Rajneesh Foundation, Poona, India.

It is only because of ignorance that the Supreme Consciousness appears as finite. When ignorance is destroyed, the Supreme Consciousness which does not admit of any multiplicity whatsoever, truly reveals Itself by Itself, like the sun when the cloud is removed.

—Shankara



A TOTAL YES TO LIFE

by BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH

THIS SIMPLE WORD 'yes' contains all the religions of the world. It contains trust, it contains love, it contains surrender. It contains all the prayers that have ever been made, are being made, and will ever be made.

If you can say yes with the totality of your heart, you have said all that can be said. To say yes to existence is to be religious, to say no is to be irreligious.

That's my definition of the atheist and the theist. The atheist is not one who denies God, and the theist is not one who believes in God—not necessarily so, because we have seen great theists who never believed in any God. We have known Buddha, Mahavira, Adinath; we have known tremendously enlightened people who

never talked about God. But they also talked about yes, they had to talk about yes . . . .

There are people who are theists, believers in God, churchgoers, worshippers, and yet in their hearts there is no yes. In their hearts there is doubt. On the surface they behave religiously; deep down they are suspicious. It is not what you do that is decisive, it is what you feel at the deepest core of your being that determines, that creates you. And there are atheists who go on saying there is no God, but they are not in any way different from the believers. Their disbelief has as much doubt in it as the belief of the believers.

In Soviet Russia, in China, and in other Red countries, disbelief is the belief; not to believe is to be a conformist, to believe is to be revolutionary. The state goes on teaching that there is no God. If people are taught continuously, conditioned continuously, they become whatsoever they are conditioned for. It is a kind of mass hypnosis.

The really religious person has a deep communion with existence. He can say yes to a rose, he can say yes to the stars, he can say yes to people, he can say yes to his own being, to his own desires. He can say yes to whatsoever life brings to him—he is a yes-sayer. And in this yes-saying is contained the essential prayer.

The last words of Jesus on earth were: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. Amen."

Do you know this word 'amen,' what it means? It simply means "Yes, Lord, yes. Let thy will be done. Don't listen to what I say, I am ignorant. Don't listen to what I desire; my desires are stupid—bound to be so. Go on doing whatsoever you feel right, go on doing the right in spite of me." That is the meaning of the word 'amen.' Mohammedans also end their prayer with 'amin.' It is the same word.

YOU say, Beloved Bhagwan, yes!

This is the beginning of real *sannyas.* If you can say yes with totality, with no strings attached to it, with no conditions, with no desire for any rewards, if you can simply enjoy saying yes, if it is your dance, your song, then it is your prayer. And all prayers reach God, whether God is mentioned or not, whether you believe in God or not. All prayers reach God. To reach him a prayer has only to be an authentic prayer.

But I would like to tell you that your yes should not only be a prayer. It should become your very lifestyle, it should become your flavor, your fragrance.

Down the ages, religions have been teaching people life-negation, life-condemnation. Down the ages, religions have been

telling you that you are sinners, that your bodies are the houses of sin, that you have to destroy your life in order to praise the Lord, that you have to renounce the world to be accepted by the Lord. This is all holy cow dung, utter nonsense.

Life-affirmation, not life-negation, is religion, because God is life and there is no other God. God is the green of the trees and the red of the trees and the gold of the trees. God is all over the place: only God is. To deny means to deny God, to condemn means to condemn God, to renounce means you are thinking yourself wiser than God.

God has given you this life, this tremendously valuable gift, and you cannot even appreciate it. You cannot welcome it, you cannot feel any gratitude for it. On the contrary, you are complaining and complaining and complaining. Your heart is full of grudge, not gratitude.

I teach you a tremendous total yes to life. I teach you not renunciation but rejoicing. Rejoice! Rejoice! I say again and again, rejoice! —because in your rejoicing you will come closest to God.

When the dancer disappears in his dance, he is divine. When the singer disappears in his song, he is divine. Rejoice so deeply, so totally, that you disappear in your rejoicing: there is rejoicing but there is nobody who is rejoicing.

When it comes to such an optimum, there is a transformation, a revolution. You are no more the old, dark, ugly self. You are showered with blessings; for the first time you come to know your grandeur, the splendor of your being.

Say yes to life, say a total yes to life. That's what *sannyas* is all about. I don't give you concepts, dogmas, and creeds. I only give you a certain life-affirmative lifestyle, a philosophy of life-reverence.

(Transcript of a discourse given before a gathering of 3,000 disciples and visitors at the Shree Rajneesh Ashram in Poona on February 17, 1979.)

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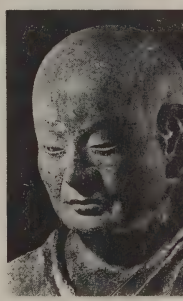
THE COMING of a spiritual age must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing number of individuals who are no longer satisfied with the normal intellectual, vital, and physical existence of man, but perceive that a greater evolution is the real goal of humanity and attempt to effect it in themselves, to lead others to it, and to make it the recognized goal of the race. In proportion as they succeed and to the degree to which they carry this evolution, the yet unrealized potentiality which they represent will become an actual possibility of the future.

—Sri Aurobindo, THE HUMAN CYCLE

SRI AUROBINDO (1872-1950) left as big an impact on the history of modern India as his contemporaries Radhakrishnan, Tagore, and Gandhi. His early involvement as a nationalist, his spiritual awakening in prison, his poetry, and his philosophy led him to the source of his greatness—yoga. Yoga was his way to spirituality because it transcended the doctrinal-creedal limitations of traditional religion and yet provided a framework for disciplined action. Among his best-known works are: SAVITRI, THE LIFE DIVINE, THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA, ESSAYS ON THE GITA, and THE SECRET OF THE VEDA.

by SRI AUROBINDO



MAN

MAN is a transitional being; he is not final. For in man and high beyond him ascend the radiant degrees that climb to a divine supermanhood. There lies our destiny and the liberating key to our aspiring but troubled and limited mundane existence.

We mean by man mind imprisoned in a living body. But mind is not the highest possible power of consciousness; for mind is not in possession of Truth, but only its ignorant seeker. Beyond mind is a supramental or gnostic power of consciousness that is in eternal possession of Truth. This supermind is at its source the dynamic consciousness, in its nature at once and inseparably infinite wisdom and infinite will of the divine Knower and Creator. Supermind is superman; a gnostic supermanhood is the next distinct and triumphant evolutionary step to be reached by earthly nature.

A TRANSITIONAL BEING

His conscious participation is needed if the glory that will replace him is to be brought into existence . . . .

The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner Spirit and the logic of Nature's process.

The appearance of a human possibility in a material and animal world was the first glint of some coming divine Light, the first far-off promise of a godhead to be born out of Matter. The appearance of the superman in the human world will be the fulfillment of this divine promise. Out of the material consciousness in which our mind works as a chained slave is emerging the disk of a secret sun of Power and Joy and Knowledge. The supermind will be the formed body of that radiant effulgence.

Supermanhood is not man climbed to his own natural zenith,

not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, intelligence, will, character, genius, dynamic force, saintliness, love, purity or perfection. Supermind is something beyond mental man and his limits; it is a greater consciousness than the highest consciousness proper to human nature.

Man is a mental being whose mentality works here involved, obscure and degraded in a physical brain. Even in the highest of his kind it is balked of its luminous possibilities of supreme force and freedom by this dependence, shut off even from its own divine powers, impotent to change our life beyond certain narrow and precarious limits; it is an imprisoned and checked force, most often nothing but a servitor or caterer of interests or a purveyor of amusement to the life and the body. But divine superman will be a gnostic spirit. Supermind in him will lay hands on the mental and physical instruments and, standing above and yet penetrating our lower already manifested parts, it will transform mind, life and body.

Mind is the highest force in man. But mind in man is an ignorant, clouded and struggling power. And even when most luminous it is possessed only of a thin, reflected and pallid light. A supermind free, master, expressive of divine glories will be the superman's central instrument. Its untrammelled movement of self-existent knowledge, spontaneous power and untainted delight will impress the harmony of the life of the gods on the earthly existence.

Man in himself is little more than an ambitious nothing. He is a littleness that reaches to a wideness and a grandeur that are beyond him, a dwarf enamoured of the heights. His mind is a dark ray in the splendors of the universal Mind. His life is a striving, exulting, suffering, an eager passion-tossed and sorrow-stricken or a blindly and dumbly longing petty moment of the universal Life. His body is a laboring perishable speck in the material universe. This cannot be the end of the mysterious upward surge of Nature. There is something beyond, something that mankind shall be; it is seen now only in broken glimpses through rifts in the great wall of limitations that deny its possibility and existence. An immortal soul is somewhere within him and gives out some sparks of its presence; above, an eternal spirit overshadows him and upholds the soul-continuity of his nature. But this greater spirit is obstructed from descent by the hard lid of his constructed personality; and that inner luminous soul is wrapped, stifled, oppressed in dense outer coatings. In all but a few the soul is seldom active; in most hardly perceptive. The soul and spirit in man seem rather to exist above and behind his nature than to be a part of his external and visible reality. They are in course of birth rather than born in Matter; they are for human consciousness possibilities rather than things realized and present.

Man's greatness is not in what he is, but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed place and secret workshop

Sri Aurobindo

of a living labor in which supermanhood is being made ready by a divine Craftsman. But he is admitted too to a yet greater greatness, and it is that, allowed to be unlike the lower creation, he is partly an artisan of this divine change; his conscious assent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him. His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental creator.

If earth calls and the Supreme answers, the hour can be even now for that immense and glorious transformation.

But what shall be the gain to be won for the earth-consciousness we embody by this unprecedented ascent from mind to supermind and what the ransom of supramental change? To what end should man leave his safe human limits for this hazardous adventure?

First consider what was gained when Nature passed from the brute inconscience and inertia of what seems inanimate Matter to the vibrant awakening of sensibility of plant range. Life was gained; the gain was the first beginnings of a mite groping and involved, reaching a consciousness that stretches out dumbly for growth, toward sense vibration, to a preparation for vital yearnings, a living joy and beauty. The plant achieved a first form of life but could not possess it, because this first organized life-consciousness had feeling and seeking but blind, dumb, deaf, chained to the soil and involved in its own nerve and tissue, it could not get out of them, could not get behind its nerve self as does the vital mind of the animal; still less could it turn down from above upon it to know and realize and control its own motions as does the observing and thinking mind in man. This was an imprisoned gain, for there was still a gross oppression of the first inconscience which had covered up with the brute phenomenon of Matter and of Energy of Matter all signs of the Spirit. Nature could in no wise stop here, because she held much in her that was still occult, potential, unexpressed, unorganized, latent; the evolution had perforce to go farther. The animal had to replace the plant at the head and top of Nature.

And what then was gained when Nature passed from the obscurity of the plant kingdom to the awakened sense-desire and emotion and free mobility of animal life? The gain was liberated sense and feeling and desire and courage and cunning and the contrivance of the objects of desire, passion and action and hunger and battle and conquest and the sex-call and play and pleasure, and all the joy and pain of the conscious living creature. Not only the life of the body which the animal has in common with the plant but a life-mind that appeared for the first time in the earth-story and grew from form to more organized form till it reached in the best the limit of its own formula.

The animal achieved a first form of mind, but could not possess it, because this first organized mind-consciousness was

enslaved to a narrow scope, tied to the full functioning of the physical body and brain and nerve, tied to serve the physical life and its desires and needs and passions, limited to the insistent uses of the vital urge, to material longing and feeling and action, bound in its own inferior instrumentation, its spontaneous combinings of association and memory and instinct. It could not get away from them, could not get behind them as man's intelligence gets behind them to observe them; still less could it turn down on them from above as do human reason and will to control, enlarge, re-order, exceed, sublimate.

At each capital step of Nature's ascent there is a reversal of consciousness in the evolving spirit. As when a climber turns on a summit to which he has labored and looks down with an exalted and wider power of vision on all that was once above or on a level with him but is now below his feet, the evolutionary being not only transcends his past self, his former now exceeded status but commands from a higher grade of self-experience and vision, with a new apprehending feeling or a new comprehending sight and effectuating power in a greater system of values, all that was once his own consciousness but is now below him and belongs to an inferior realm. This reversal is the sign of a decisive victory and the seal of a radical progress in Nature.

The new consciousness attained in the spiritual evolution is always higher in grade and power, always larger, more comprehensive, wider in sight and feeling, richer and finer in faculties, more complex, organic, dominating than the consciousness that was once our own but is now left behind us. There are greater breadth and space, heights before impassable, unexpected depths and intimacies. There is a luminous expansion that is the very sign-manual of the Supreme upon his work.

Mark that each of the great radical steps forward already taken by Nature has been infinitely greater in its change, incalculably vaster in its consequences than its puny predecessor. There is a miraculous opening to an always richer and wider expression, there is a new illuminating of the creation and a dynamic heightening of its significances. There is in this world we live in no equality of all on a flat level, but a hierarchy of ever-increasing precipitous superiorities pushing their mountain shoulders upwards toward the Supreme.

Because man is a mental being, he naturally imagines that mind is the one great leader and actor and creator or the indispensable agent in the universe. But this is an error; even for knowledge mind is not the only or the greatest possible instrument, the one aspirant and discoverer. Mind is a clumsy interlude between Nature's vast and precise subconscient action and the vaster infallible superconscient action of the Godhead.

There is nothing mind can do that cannot be better done in the

mind's immobility and thought-free stillness.

When the mind is still, then Truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence.

Truth cannot be attained by the Mind's thought but only by identity and silent vision. Truth lives in the calm wordless Light of the eternal spaces; she does not intervene in the noise and cackle of logical debate.

Thought in the mind can at most be Truth's brilliant and transparent garment; it is not even her body. Look through the robe, not at it, and you may see some hint of her form. There can be a thought-body of Truth, but that is the spontaneous supramental Thought and Word that leap fully formed out of the Light, not any difficult mental counterfeit and patchwork. The Supramental Thought is not a means of arriving at Truth, but a way of expressing her; for Truth in the Supermind is self-found or self-existent. It is an arrow from the Light, not a bridge to reach it.

Cease inwardly from thought and word, be motionless within you, look upward into the light and outward into the vast cosmic consciousness that is around you. Be more and more one with the brightness and the vastness. Then will Truth dawn on you from above and flow in you from all around you.

But only if the mind is no less intense in its purity than its silence. For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo of sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy it distorts and disfigures what it receives. If it is not wide, it cannot house the effective power and creative force of the Truth. Some light may play there but it becomes narrow, confined and sterile: the Force that is descending is cabined and thwarted and withdraws again to its vast heights from this rebellious foreign plane. Or even if something comes down and remains it is a pearl in the mire; for no change takes place in the nature or else there is formed only a thin intensity that points narrowly upward to the summits, but can hold little and diffuse less upon the world around it.

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He who has seen the highest man must do all he can to make him possible. —*Nietzsche*

Saint Augustine And The Beggar

IT WAS on a day when I was preparing a speech to be delivered in praise of the emperor; there would be a lot of lies in the speech, and they would be applauded by those who knew that they were lies. My heart was all wrought up with the worry of it all and was boiling in a kind of fever of melting thoughts. I was going along one of the streets of Milan when I noticed a poor beggar; he was fairly drunk, I suppose, and was laughing and enjoying himself. It was a sight which depressed me, and I spoke to the friends who were with me about all the sorrows which come to us because of our own madness. I thought of how I was toiling away, spurred on by my desires and dragging after me the load of my unhappiness and making it all the heavier by dragging it, and it seemed to me that the goal of this and all such endeavors was simply to reach a state of happiness that was free from care; the beggar had reached this state before us, and we, perhaps, might never reach it at all. With the few pennies that he had managed to beg he had actually obtained what I, by so many painful turns and such devious ways, was struggling to reach—namely, the joy of a temporary happiness.

No doubt the beggar's joy was not true joy; but it was a great deal truer than the joy which I, with my ambition, was seeking. And undoubtedly he was happy while I was worried; he was carefree while I was full of fears. And if I were asked which I would prefer, to be merry or to be frightened, I should reply, "to be merry." But if I were asked next whether I should prefer to be a man like the beggar or a man like I then was myself, I should choose to be myself, worn out as I was with my cares and my fears. Was this not absurd? Was there any good reason for making such a choice? For I had no right to put myself in front of the beggar on the grounds that I was more learned than he, since I got no joy out of my learning. Instead I used it to give pleasure to men—not to teach them, only to please them. And therefore you were breaking my bones with the rod of your discipline.

—THE CONFESSIONS, Book VI, Chapter 6

From THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE translated by Rex Warner. Copyright © 1963 by Rex Warner. Reprinted by arrangement with The New American Library, Inc., New York, New York,

When a man loves a woman so
that her life is present in his own,
the You of her eyes allows him
to gaze into a ray of the eternal You . . . .
–MARTIN BUBER

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER:
Revitalizing Love

by LEON GERSTEN

AT LONG LAST there is hope for the institution of marriage. The secret is love. Real love conveyed with the heart. On a deep, emotional level.

Marriage Encounter is the way. It is sheer magic. Revitalization. A shot in the arm for faltering marriages. And it works. Splendidly.

"God does not make junk."

These were the first words that struck me. If God does not err in His creations, then all people are inherently beautiful. I am beautiful. My wife is beautiful. My children and all my friends are beautiful. Marriage, too, is beautiful. After all, we are made in His eye.

"Love is God's plan."

More words to nourish the heart and soul. The message is clear: my wife and I didn't just happen to meet and unite; it was God's intention that it be. Love and marriage, then, are as much a part of God's universal design as are the stars that glitter, or the oceans that flow, or the snows that blanket the earth with purity. How ennobling to believe this–that my wife and I are life's partner's by the grace of God. How beautiful to feel so sanctified.

"I am what I feel."

I used to believe I am what I think. Now it is different. There is a new current in my life: I am, too, what I feel. I can tap the essence of my being, learn to project feelings as well as ideas, and know that

deep within pulses more primal energy. For too long, I buried emotions, wrapped them away as insignificant, unbecoming to a man, even denied their existence. And then, a whole new world opened up when I allowed myself to experience a Marriage Encounter Weekend, which helped me to see that all people, including me, build their lives on a foundation of feelings. It is a richer world for my knowing it.

"Love is a decision."

But the process of change is not all that easy. It just doesn't happen. You have to reach out for it, want it more than anything else. Like anything else it is a decision.

Simple and pure, it has the echo of radiance. I now know love just doesn't perpetuate itself. I must nurture it. I am in control of its being or not being. When I show love to my wife, for example, I am, at that very moment, making a conscious decision to reach out to someone dear to me. It is, I have learned, a delicious decision to make in this world of ours.

"We wear masks to protect ourselves."

I recall my original weekend—44 hours of intensive, searching examination that penetrated my defenses, defenses I created, like the Great Wall of China, to keep out marauders. They were solid walls of self-protectiveness shielding me from the ones I cared most

about. As a result, these people never really knew me. Even my wife, who had been the closest for eighteen years, found me a mystery. I came to Marriage Encounter with sound reasons: to make a relatively good marriage better, to remove it from the atrophy I thought was normal. This experience of being locked away with the woman I love showed me the way. I have been trying to follow it ever since.

"Communicate with the heart."

The heart speaks many languages, but I never learned them. Now I had to acquire a new alphabet: the ABC's of relating openly to another. Listening is part of it; hearing is another; revealing is a third. There are more parts: trust, genuineness, a commitment to God and all his loving creations. It isn't the words I use that matter; it's the gestures I show that reveal the very deepest levels of my consciousness. My whole tone, manner, and voice are all invested in the communication of love. Simply, it's a process of curtailing the intellectual side of me, learning when to shut it off in favor of what is generating in my heart.

"The struggle to relate is universal."

Thanks to two demonstrating couples and a clergyman and his wife, we were able to tap the struggles of total strangers, people like ourselves, courageous enough to reveal the intimacies of their life together, to indicate the ups and downs of marriage, to make it easier for us to reach into ourselves. Graphically, they described problems all of us are greeted with in life–sex, parents, children, money, job and career, shifting roles, shame and guilt, lack of confidence. They helped us to see how they, as a loving pair, confronted their problems and how that confrontation drew them closer together and thus made their bedrock of love firmer. Tears flowed, voices faltered, bodies trembled, as the pain of living and loving was confessed openly. I looked at my wife and made a decision: that I would work hard to break down the walls between us, especially those I was in the habit of putting up.

"Write in the language of emotions."

Not "I think" but rather "I feel." Thinking is impersonal, feeling more basic. Amazing how a simple word can be taken for granted and regarded with such indifference. All my life I had been responding to people with my head, in these non-revealing words: "I think that . . . ." What a difference when a person says, "I feel so ashamed when I become angry," instead of "I think I acted poorly when I became angry." The leading couples, through their own testimony, guided us to a new language.

The words are easy when you write them. Speaking them takes longer. Ten minutes away from my spouse, responding to the question "How do you feel when your spouse withdraws from you," I wrote the following:

"The times when you pull away from me because of some hurt

make me feel so fearful, and at times panicky. I begin to feel responsible for the pain you are facing, and I want so much to share it with you, to let you know that I really care, that I am there as your support. I love you so much that no matter how distressed you are, I want to help you shoulder the weight of this distress, to provide the strength you need. When I am shut out, I feel like a person left on shore while a rescue boat paddles away. In the future, help me to be more a part of your anguish. I love you so."

"Trust takes a long time to build."

It's really very basic. If I act in an unacceptable way toward my wife, she is likely to think twice about being open with me. Trust is such a fragile thing. How difficult to build, how easy to destroy. When I once asked my wife why she didn't share her feelings with me, she said, "Because I'm afraid you won't accept them." My answer, "That's ridiculous," only made the void wider. What was happening, I learned through our daily dialogue, was that I was hiding my own feelings as well as refusing to accept hers. It took a lot of introspection on my part to realize that I was not being entirely open and accepting.

When this happens in marriage, the door to honest communication is closed. And it is not easily opened. It takes a great deal of renegotiation to pry it open. Trusting my spouse is listening to her innermost feelings and accepting them for what they are.

"Feelings are."

Ideas can be refuted but never feelings. The way a person feels at any given moment is a mirror of vulnerability. If my wife says, "I feel hurt by what you said to me," I accept the hurt part and hope to know the why only after I assimilate the nature of the hurt and what it is doing to her inside. I never become defensive, or reject such openness, or strive to maintain any position of right. If I have indeed hurt the woman I love, I wish to feel it and know it.

Being hurt, fearful, angry, ashamed, guilty, embarrassed are feelings we all share now and then. They are more basic to us than attitudes or stances on politics or the world situation. They require no rebuttal, only an attentive, loving ear.

"Know yourself first."

How we relate to another person depends on how we are feeling about ourselves first and foremost. For example, we can't begin to satisfy another human being until we have first satisfied our own needs. Too, we cannot love fully until we have within us self-love. Out of that peace and contentment with self comes the capacity to make another happy.

Since we function as need-satisfiers, I can't satisfy my wife's needs until I understand my own first of all. Then, as a couple, if we understand our needs, we can come to understand other people's needs as well. We are then able to function in a larger sense—outside

of ourselves—and thus grow as a couple as well as individually.

One primary need of mine is privacy to read and write. Without it, I feel reduced, denied, unsatisfied. Because I had not imparted this to my wife, but merely physically took myself away from her, she construed it as ignoring her and not being willing to share private moments. When I explained lovingly the extent of my need to create and enrich my mind, she was able to *feel* how vital the time away from her was to my well being. I learned, too, that she had needs that were being unsatisfied, such as lying in bed in the early morning, or sitting and talking in the comfort of our room. Through such open revelations, we were able to understand what each as an individual required to be happy. And were better equipped to satisfy couple needs. When the self is complete, the love and affection are more intense.

"Being vulnerable is being human."

How much we hide and bury of our experiences. How we pretend that all is well with the world when pain throbs our very being. To admit to pain is to be vulnerable. It's like opening a scab to see how deep the wound is. It hurts, it pains, it shakes one's whole being. Facing up to one's pain and anguish is what vulnerability is all about.

For the first time in our marriage, I cried. I cried intensely, so painful was the process of recalling the time of losing my father, of seeing him depart dramatically from my life. I had tried to put it under lock and key, but it was useless. What a relief it was to get it out—to verbalize how I felt so many years ago, to say it all to the woman I love. Having her share this terrible wrench in my life was like rolling a boulder down a mountain, as a result of which I felt light and free.

Awakening to one's vulnerability is one of the many outcomes of Marriage Encounter. Opening the sores of human experience is a sure way of lancing cuts and wounds that always lie just below the surface of consciousness.

"Renewal is commitment."

The weekend was capped with a mock marriage, in which we were asked to take our original marriage vows and invest them with new meaning. After eighteen years of uncertainty, I felt this renewed spirit keenly. To be married again, before all these other couples, was a blessing that finalized a magnificent experience. I turned to my wife and whispered, "Why the hell didn't we love and respond to each other like this eighteen years ago?" She put it well: "Because we were too dumb then to know what real love is."

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Love is a cosmic force. For those who stand in it and behold in it, men emerge from their entanglement in busy-ness; and the good and the evil, the clever and the foolish, the beautiful and the ugly, one after another become actual . . . . —Martin Buber

MEMORY GEMS

by JANET HARBISON PENFIELD

WHEN I was in Sunday School in the days after radio but before television, the close of the school year was marked by "Children's Day." Perhaps the occasion should have been known as "Parents' Day," since the parents were the ones who preened and puffed at their young ones' prowess. For the children, it was mainly perspiration and hard work.

For on Children's Day, each of us had to speak a piece, or recite a *memory gem.* This could be a Bible verse: "Jesus wept" was much favored by the lazy or forgetful. Or it could be something more demanding like all the verses of "I think when I read that sweet story," or a recitation of the books of the Bible in order.

The "pieces" were assigned by the teacher with at least some reference to the talents of the children. The nursery class, for instance, would often stand on the platform, hair neatly slicked and socks clean, and intone together, "Jesus loves me, this I know . . . ." The pieces got more complicated as the children got taller. Some "quick studies" even managed to recite all of Psalm 139.

The speaking of pieces went on in "regular" school, too, not just in Sunday School. If I can bore you with a recitation of "The Daffodils" by William Wordsworth, even today, it is because I had to learn it in the fourth grade.

I do not recall that anyone ever rebelled against this "rote" learning. In fact it was rather fun. Children would amuse themselves by capping each others' quotations, both sacred and secular.

Then learning "by heart" fell out of favor. It was confidently asserted by pedagogues that the goal was to develop children's reasoning powers, and not to make parrots of them. All very true, undoubtedly, and committing things to memory had perhaps got a bit out of hand. One (probably) unforeseen consequence of abandoning *memory gems* seems to be several generations of young people in whom Biblical illiteracy is almost total. A professor of music told me not long ago of his frustrations in trying to teach Bach's "Passion

According To St John" to college students. They had never heard of St John, and their idea of "passion" had nothing to do with the life of Christ.

Now, specialists in education tell me, there is again a body of opinion in their field that thinks learning by heart not altogether a bad thing. The pendulum may be swinging, and speaking pieces may be coming back.

Among my acquaintances, quite a few are able to recall what happened forty years ago, but can't remember the doings of last week. And all of us know eight-year-olds who can tell us the batting average of every player on every team in the American League. This is to say that children memorize things with astounding ease, and that the furniture we arrange around our mental walls when we are young has a way of staying in place when all else shifts.

The stately old prayers from the Anglican prayer book come quickly to my lips because as a child I attended a camp run by two Episcopalian schoolteachers, where we had prayers every morning. In one family that came to adulthood during World War II in Europe, the parents had the happy thought of taking their birthday and Christmas presents in the form of poems or hymns memorized by each child and recited ceremoniously on the proper day. The "children" now recall not only the pieces they learned but the sense of achievement they experienced, and the joy with which they "gave" these presents to their parents.

One very old lady I know says that she does not sleep so well anymore. But she is glad of wakeful hours, for in them she repeats to herself the shining passages of Scripture, the fine old poems she learned by heart as a child. Luckily, she grew up in an age when the things one learned were on the whole worth learning.

Children learn *memory gems* whether they have to or not. Often the pieces are the seductive and catchy jingles offered by TV ads for fast-food chains and breakfast cereal. There is probably no harm in knowing that at So-and-So's "we do it all for you." Only, on some lost and lonely night years hence, maybe most of us would rather be furnished with "A mighty fortress is our God."

•

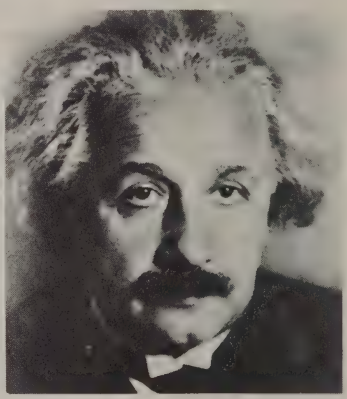
That you need God more than anything, you know at all times in your heart. But don't you know also that God needs you—in the fullness of his eternity, you? —Martin Buber

BOOKS

Curious Children Before The Great Mystery

AT THE TURN of the century, Max Weber, the German social theorist, lamented the "disenchantment of the world" inherent in the rationality of over specialized modern science. In his lecture, "Science as a Vocation," he illustrates the shift in scientific attitude from searching for God in His works to "an unreal realm of artificial abstractions which with their bony hands seek to grasp the blood and sap of true life without even catching up to it . . . ."

During the same era that Weber spoke about the Philistine nature and intense specialization of those who chose science as their vocation, a gentle physicist working in the Swiss patent office in Bern was gaining recognition for theories that forever changed the course of modern physics and of the modern world itself. Theories that this physicist tested prior to observation by "asking himself whether, if he were God, he would have made the universe in that way."



Albert Einstein, as portrayed by his correspondence in *The Human Side of Einstein,* rather than being a source of "disenchantment," was nearer Renaissance Man in his commitment to Truth (which he always capitalized) and his Judaic humanism. His Taoist-like love of nature, kindness, humility, and his appreciation of music, literature, and philosophy display a man enchanted and in love with life.

When a Sunday School class wrote Einstein to ask if scientists pray, he replied that "everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the universe—a spirit vastly superior to that of man, and one in the face of which we with our modest powers must feel humble . . . ."

Einstein, aware of the dangers of too technical an orientation of the world and such "disastrous by-products" as Nazism, never lost sight of the ethical precepts of Judaism. He became an active Zionist, not just in reaction to Nazism, nor from a nationalist temperament, but more as an "ideal that can restore to the Jewish people their joy in existence . . . ." A value Einstein portrayed in his daily living.

Joy was the tenor of Einstein's life, a life given to Truth as a humble prayer. His joy is revealed in the comic verse he wrote for close friends and in his playful curiosity. In a letter to a friend just turned eighty, Einstein said, "People like you and me, though mortal, of course, like everyone else, do not grow old no matter how long we live. What I mean is that we never cease to stand like curious children before the great Mystery into which we are born . . . ."

The Human Side of Einstein (edited and compiled by Helen Dukas and Banesh Hoffman, Princeton University Press, $8.95) is a treasury of correspondence, and more than that it is an insight into the inner life of genius. It turns out to be a vivid contrast to Max Weber's portrait of the over specialized, Philistine image of the scientist's vocation and places the true spirit of science where it belongs—with that which is enchanting and sacred. —B.W.

Pride of Our People, by David Gross *(Doubleday, $14.95).* Here are one-hundred mini-biographies of Jewish notables from Maimonides to Bess Meyerson. In an age said to be hungry for heroes and heroines, this book is a morale-lifter. Jewish heroes are for the most part people with brains—every president of the State of Israel has been a scholar, every cabinet member was once a Hebrew teacher. Other fields are represented: baseball (by pitcher Sandy Koufax), politics (Secretary of Defense Harold Brown), the chaplaincy (by Rabbi Alexander Goode, one of the famous four chaplains who gave up their lifebelts and perished at sea). Non-Jews as well as Jews will enjoy this potpourri.

Coming Home to Zion: A Pictorial History of Pre-Israel Palestine, by Abraham Shulman *(Doubleday, $14.95).* Israel did not spring out of Ben-Gurion's forehead in 1948. For a century before that, Jewish settlers went to the Holy Land, bought land, cleared the wilderness, tilled the soil, established schools, and eventually created a shadow government ready to take over when the British left. The pictorial record contained in this book is striking: a few dozen Jews standing in a circle on a sand dune which was to become the city of Tel-Aviv, Ben-Gurion in Turkish clothing, etc.

Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics, by James M. Gustafson *(University of Chicago Press, $12.50).* Do you do what's right *because* it's right? Or do you do what's right *when* it's right? These seemingly simple questions reflect the great divide between a system of ethics which is absolute and one (situationalism) which varies from place to place and from time to time. By and large, Catholics have adhered to the idea that God's law is immutable, valid for all times and climes. Protestants, on the other hand, have inclined toward the notion that man's concept of right shifts with circumstances. Lay readers will find this painstaking excursion through the outstanding moral philosophers of both groups somewhat arduous to traverse. —S.M.S.

LETTERS

Dear Sir:

The real issue behind all world affairs these days is survival in a nuclear age, and the real danger is our own destructive impulses. Love rather than armaments is the solution, but not the erroneous concepts of love that involve absorption, domination, possession, and suspicion. What is needed is the love expressed in the Greek *agape,* or the Latin *caritas.* Whether or not we admit it, we want and need such love to survive as individuals just as the world needs it to survive as peoples.

In life's series of crises, perhaps it is a new conception of love we need—so that whatever we do, we are inspired *through love, by giving*—as in Matthew 26:7, in which genuine love propelled a generous woman to dedicate to the Son of God, a precious balm, the fruit of an entire year's labor! That the Pharisees 2000 years ago or today should name this act of unselfishness "purposeless waste" only serves to demonstrate the unevolved judgment men allow themselves.

Certainly, because men and women rarely die before our eyes from lack of love, we assume they can live without it . . . but do we ever stop and think it is *a form of death* to merely exist? There is no higher price to pay than love's denial.

Yours truly,
Simonne Dickinson, Bellevue, Washington

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To Be Untethered

by THOMAS JOHN CARLISLE

Tied to a dying animal is the soul–
Something like that Yeats said.
Yet Yeats, some say, is dead.
Not Yeats but what of him was animal.
I too am slave to the body that I prize
for all it has yielded me,
but I look beyond this natural slavery
to what will remain once death my soul *un*ties.

The Self. Drop It

An aged Brahman came to the Buddha bearing gifts in either hand, and eager to receive enlightenment. Said the Blessed One, 'Drop it.' The Brahman let fall one of his gifts. Again the order came: 'Drop it.' The Brahman let fall the other gift and remained empty-handed. 'Drop it,' came the order yet again. The Brahman was for the moment at a loss, then smiled, for he had attained enlightenment.

The search for Self becomes the purpose of life, the subject of all meditation, the background state of mind to all activity. We are seeking not for a magnified 'I' but for a force which grows increasingly to the extent that 'I' is felt to be *not.*

–Christmas Humphreys *(The Search Within)*

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ASK

If
a prayer
is needed for someone
or for yourself,
let us know.

Write
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Suggested BOOKS

Following are some of the books which have been used in the preparation of this issue:

DYING FOR ENLIGHTENMENT, Living With Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, by Bernard Gunther, Harper & Row Publishers Inc., 10 E. 53 Street, New York, New York 10022. $6.95

THE ESSENTIAL AUROBINDO. Schocken Books, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016.

THE CONFESSIONS OF ST AUGUSTINE translated by Rex Warner. New American Library, 1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019. $1.95

I AND THOU by Martin Buber, a new translation by Walter Kaufman. Charles Scribners Publishers, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

THE PROPHET by Kahlil Gibran. Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 201 E. 50 Street, New York, New York 10022.

THE SEARCH WITHIN, A Course in Meditation, by Christmas Humphreys. Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016. $3.95

THOU ART OUR NEED

OUR GOD, who art our winged self, it is thy will in us that willeth.
It is thy desire in us that desireth.
It is thy urge in us that would turn our nights, which are thine, into days which are thine also.
We cannot ask thee for aught, for thou knowest our needs before they are born in us:
Thou art our need; and in giving us more of thyself thou givest us all.

From THE PROPHET by Kahlil Gibran
(Published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York)

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